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682 dependent on charity. At best the elders fixed a sum to be paid by
*628 the murderer for leave to work his own land: the money paid, the avenger gave his word not to molest him; or a 'strong' friend guaranteed his safety as he tilled his fields. This arrangement continued until he was killed elsewhere or the avenger consented to make peace.

*628 Various devices were tried to outwit an avenger too venomous
[562 to make the smallest concession to his 'imprisoned' enemy. The
[842] commonest was for the murderer to let his land to a neutral on the usual Albanian terms of 'halves'. Once some men of Lurë, trusting to the prevailing immunity of women from attack, dressed in their wives' clothes and went out to work. They were soon discovered and compelled to return home. Frequently a woman was made to work alongside the men, the assumption being that from fear of accidentally hitting the women and so disgracing himself the avenger would not fire on the party. The man who murdered the brother of Kodhel Dede of Nezhar in Shpat belonged to a large family, the members of which went to work with a woman between every two men. Kodhel thus found it impossible to kill one of them and after a long period of years made peace. Sometimes a man's wife kept watch while he worked; if she signalled the enemy's approach, he seized his rifle and prepared to defend himself. During Kodhel Dede's feud with the Trepsanishti family he found himself long baulked by the vigilance of his enemy's wife.
[796 At last his chance came on the eve of 15 August. The wife had her
[762] mind set on making *melata* (sacrificial foods) for distribution on the festival, and, forgetting her husband who was at work on the threshing floor, she went home to make them. Kodhel, who had crept up through a maize field, shot her husband as soon as her back was turned. In the hilly landscape of Fulqet in west Mat a different sort of watch was kept. The 'imprisoned' men, aided by friends, dug a hole on top of a hill commanding a wide view. One of their best shots, rifle in hand, settled down in this hole ready to snipe the avenger if he tried to kill any of the men at work.

*628 Work in the fields apart, an 'imprisoned' murderer might for
572 short periods leave his house under escort of a friend. This friend
682 had to be 'strong', otherwise the murderer might be killed by his enemy, a lasting disgrace to the man whose protégé he was for the time being. Sometimes murderer and avenger had a common friend who took the former out; in that case the friend ran less risk

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of losing his protégé, but even so he had to be fairly 'strong'. In Mat such a friend might take the murderer out three times with impunity. Afterwards he was sure to receive a message from the avenger which ran, 'Don't stir out again. Stay indoors. It was for your sake that I didn't fire.'

In the majority of cases the murderer neither ran away nor was shut up, but went about his normal business, taking certain precautions. An Albanian never despised his enemy; the strongest man will say, 'I am stronger than he is, but a rifle doesn't care for bravery, a rifle kills'. He remembers also that an enemy is ever on the watch: 'A wooden stake rots, but an enemy doesn't.' Yet another saying—this from west Mat—'Wood rots, a wrong doesn't'. 'A feud can't be forgotten.' 'A man with an enemy is like a hare sitting on its form, he must watch all the time.'

The first precaution a hunted man had to take at home was never to answer the door himself.

Since the laws of hospitality were rigid and seldom transgressed, a guest seldom killed, or was killed by, his host. Frok Gjeta of Kthellë, however, had lost his father at a guest's hands; three men had called and been unsuspectingly admitted; the old man was hospitably making coffee when they suddenly opened fire and killed him.

About 1910 some men called at a house in Orenjë, in Çermenikë, and were admitted by its widowed mistress as guests. They seized the only adult male in the house, her stripling son and, hanging him head downwards by a rope slung across a rafter, demanded money and avowed that they were avenging the murder of one of their kin by the family. The son said he had no money; the mother screamed that she had a little, but they hanged her son.

Another precaution commonly taken by a 'wanted' man was to live in a house of more than one storey. Such a house never had more than slits for windows in the ground floor and those in the upper room were square holes without glass, across which stone shutters were drawn at night. In Çermenikë the outside staircase that led down to the stables on the ground floor was always fenced in carefully with wood. For greater security the women lived on the ground floor protecting the men who lived above. If a man were rich enough, he built a high wall round the house; this gave him the freedom of his courtyard. In this case all the windows looked inwards on the court; the outer walls were blank save for

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from place to place. In Shpat the original criminal must take the initiative and go to his enemy's house, escorted for safety's sake by at least one friend. The enemy came to meet him in the open air, but did not offer him his hand, for a man reserves his hand for his friends. Then both went into the house, the coffee, the all-essential to a peace-making, was soon served, followed perhaps by a meal with meat. Both coffee and meal were 'like a funeral', enlivened by next to no conversation and with little cordiality of mien. A day or two later the enemy must go to the original criminal's house, and the same ceremonies were gone through. Alternate visits had to be paid for some time, until at last the original enemy declared that he had forgiven the other. A marriage very often cemented the peace-making. Occasionally the attempt to make peace broke down—one's gorge rose at the idea of making friends with the murderer. Then the whole evil story began again, murder alternating with murder.

The ceremonies in Çermenikë and Martanesh followed much the same lines. New elements were introduced farther north, for example, in Krasniqë. Accompanied by six to eight men, the man originally at fault, with his hands tied behind his back, went unexpectedly on a festive evening to his enemy's house. The host, as in duty bound, said, 'Come in!' and invited them to sit down. They refused to do so until in sign of forgiveness he untied his enemy's hands. He never refused, for he said, 'Better forgive, and forget one dead man than quarrel with ten living ones'. If he had not granted their request, the murderer's escort would never have visited his house again. That night the uninvited guest ate a meal at the involuntary host's house, and the next day the man forgiven carried them all off to his house, where he provided a meal with meat pasty and sweets. Forgiveness in Krasniqë was more easily obtained for a murder done in hot blood, and the ensuing friendship was more genuine; if the murderer had ambushed his enemy, peace was more difficult to establish and the resultant friendship less real. In Lumë the murderer was thrust into his enemy's house before dawn so that his enemy might not see him coming; no notice of his coming was given beforehand. If the host did not untie his hands, the friends who accompanied him refused to drink coffee; the host always yielded to the threat of this disgrace.

In Kurbin peace was made by the same methods as in Lumë and Krasniqë. The murderer, who had the sailor collar of his jacket